

## Interview H0043: with Tsarong Rimshi, Dündül Namgyal [tib. tsha rong rim bzhi, bdud 'dul rnam rgyal],, (India, 1991) : Part No. 6 of 7

*Tsarong Rimshi, whose personal name was Dündül Namgyal, was a well-known Western educated Tibetan official from one of the richest and most important aristocratic families. He was the son of Tsarong Dzasa, the architect of the program of military and infrastructural modernization after the 13th Dalai Lama returned from exile in India in 1913. In this tape he discusses the background of Thamchö Sonam who was working as a manager (tib. nyerpa) in the Shangdab Power Station and was also said to be involved in the People's Association. He discusses in detail how Pandatsang worked at the Tibetan Government Trade Mission in Kalimpong and later worked jointly with the Chinese Trade Mission. He then discusses the [1960] demonstration in Delhi after the Dalai Lama arrived in 1959. He also discusses how he was asked to make the score of the Tibetan national anthem which was played at the March 10th commemoration day in 1960. Then he briefly describes working on the Tibetan Government's gold in Calcutta. Also, he talks about Pandatsang stopping Samding Dorje Pagmo and Sambo Jigme from going back to Tibet and later how he stopped Sambo from going back even after he got the passport and the air ticket. He repeats about his work with electric parts in 1952-53, the Chinese orders, and the road construction in Tibet. He talks about the Chinese cadre's schools, describing them as "poison dens." When the Dalai Lama went to China, he saw some people jumping into the river because people heard that many lamas had disappeared there. Finally, he talks about his experience as part of the second denshu to Chamdo when the Dalai Lama was coming back from China.*

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Q

Previously we started in 1950, then you went to [Yadong](#) and then in 1952 you returned. And in 1951 you spoke about Zhang Jingwu coming to Kalimpong, right?

A

Yes, that I told you last time and in 1952 I went back [to Lhasa].

Q

So you went up in 1952 and last time you mentioned that when you went up you said that the People's Association had organized. You said that at Shangdab there was someone who was working.

A

Thamchö Sonam la. Yes, by then our Shangdab hydro electrical work had pretty much fallen apart. We only had things to ship, but there was no work [at Trapchi]. Previous to that there was work and the people who were looking after the place, their salaries were paid. Thamchö Sonam la was the [nyerpa](#) working for the [Tsendrön](#) and my [nyerpa](#) was Bu Ane. So the two of them were there and they were looking after the place. So the daily work was going on. The canal digging had all stopped and there was no work. So they also did not have work and they just stayed. Thamchö Sonam it seems was in the People's Association. At that time he didn't come to discuss it with us.

Q

When he was working there was that in 1952.

A

He did not do any work in 1952, however, as far as a [nyerpa](#) was concerned, [Tsendrön](#) and I were both still in charge.[Note: in other words each appointed their [nyerpa](#) and Thamchö Sonamla was Tsendrön's appointee]. Our work was not completed. However, there was no work, but it had also not closed down. Thamchö la seems to have been in the People's Association and one heard that they were arrested or interrogated. I just heard about these things, but I didn't pay attention to these events.

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Q

What is Thamchö Sonam la's background.

A

It seems that previously he was a monk. I can't tell you for sure his background. He had a brother who was an abbot, but I don't recall his name.

Q

Where?

A

At Sera. Most properly it was [Sera Mey](#). He was a famous abbot who was articulate and blunt [tib. kha rtsub po] and was very sharp-tongued. He was a representative in the Full Assembly.

Q

Sera's Representative, right?

A

Yes, a Sera Representative. He came for the Full and Abbreviated Assemblies. He was very sharp-tongued. He [Thamchö Sonam] was his brother. He too was well-spoken and aggressive.

Q

What was his appearance like?

A

His face was lumpy, on the "ugly" side, [tib. rdzag di sba ri sbu ri] like you know the one who was the Thonjö here earlier [in the 1980's]

Q

Champa [tib. byams pa] something or was it Drakpa [tib. grags pa]. I have forgotten, but he is in Dharamsala.

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A

Yes, like him. His physical appearance was like him too, stout and tall.

Q

What was the name of Bu Ane.

A

We just called him Bu Ane. He was among the elder servants [of the Tsarong family]. He may have had a name, but some people sort of don't. He was just known by his nickname, Bu Ane.

Q

What was his background?

A

He was one of our [miser](#) from Lhenga [tib. lha inga], a Tsarong estate. His home was somewhat well-off and we made him a [nyerpa](#) at Shangdab [Hydroelectric site]

Q

What were his parents like?

A

I don't know.

Q

Then who is this person who had something to do with our maidservant?

A

Yes, Yes. My late mother's maidservant. She was our maidservant when I was a baby. When we were staying at Gyatso [tib. rgya mtsho] [near Norbulinga] and when we moved to Tsarong she served us throughout.

Q

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What was her name?

A

Sonam Drölma [tib. bsod nams sgrol ma]. Everyone knew her as Aja Sonam Drölma. Her husband was known as Jojo Mingmar [tib. jo jo mig dmar]. When we were at Gyatso, we had a lot of cows and he used to look after them, milk them, make butter and butter milk. After he died, Sonam Drölma continued working. So it was her son whose name was Lhotrin [tib. blo 'phrin [tib. blo 'phrin]. When I was in school he was also sent to school. My late father used to send many boys [servant's children] to school.

Q

What did Lotrin do later?

A

His mother was serving us and was in our house. Force was not used compel them to work and so he was made a monk. He was made a monk early on since he was very smart and wrote well and gradually he became a Dechang [manager].

Q

Where was he a monk?

A

At Sera. I think it was [Sera Mey](#). He was an articulate and capable person.

Q

Did he write well?

A

Yes, and he may have at first done some secretarial work. Later, I don't think he became a [chandzö](#), however he was considered among the "better category" [tib. mi drag]. It is said that he was in the People's Association.

Q

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In the People's Association there was a Tsha Drunyila and I thought that he may be the one. What does Tsha refer to?

A

Most probably [Tshaw](#) Rongba [tib. tsha ba rong pa] [a region in Kham].

Q

Was there a [Tshaw](#) Rongba Labrang?

A

Yes, he could have been a [chandzö](#) or something, although probably it was not a large [labrang](#). So that's how he got stuck with that name.

Q

Around 1951, [Pandatsang](#) was the head of the Trade Mission, right? Last time you mentioned that he knew Chinese and had been to China.

A

Yes, he did go.

Q

Then around 1954-55 was his term as Trade Mission over. Later it was said that the Trade Mission was in Pandatsang's House. What was his relationship with the Chinese?

A

I don't know the background. When he was the head of the Trade Mission he was also the governor of [Yadong](#) called the [Yadong](#) Jigyab. Probably since [Yadong](#) was close to Kalimpong the government sent him here.

Q

I hear he was appointed [Yadong](#) Jikyab.

A

Yes. It is called the [Troji](#) [tib. gro spyi]. It seems he was doing both.

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Q

Around 1951 right. When Zhang Jingwu came to Kalimpong.

A

Yes, around that time. At that time there were no Chinese [cadres] here. Zhang Jingwu arrived and then went to Lhasa, right? So the government must have informed the Trade Mission regarding the reception. During that time [Pandatsang](#) stayed at [Pandatsang](#) House. We had also been to dinner there. The Trade Mission was at Tibet House, which was located below the Convent [St Joseph's]. Kungö Lobsang Gyentsen la was the Trade Mission head, I think. Then there was Lobsang Tsewangla who was a tall man, who I think was also the Trade Mission head.

Q

Lobsang Gyentsen is Khenjung right?

A

Yes. Later he was referred to as Ganden Villa Khenjung. After the Chinese came and everything was finished in Tibet, I think it was in 1952 that - didn't the Chinese and the Indians sign a trade treaty.

Q

I think that was in 1954.

A

I don't think so. Was it?

Q

In 1954 there was some Sino-Indian agreement. Anyway, it doesn't matter.

A

So in this way, Kungö stayed as Trade Mission and he was appointed as the Chinese Trade representative [referring to Pandatsang]. Then it seemed like they were doing things together and not together. And Kungö [Pandatsang](#) must be doing his own private

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trading and taking orders of items for the Chinese. So there was an organization of sorts here. There was a short Chinese man and then there was Ongkar who was very much involved in this [trade]. So together they supplied things to the Chinese and there must have been Chinese orders. So the Trade Mission was there even after the uprising in 1959. [Interruption]. Then [Pandatsang](#) went to Tibet and the Trade Mission [head] was probably Ganden Villa Kungö. And when [Pandatsang](#) was there, he seemed to have been working with the Chinese. The Chinese had their office and residence in [Pandatsang](#) House.

Q

Pandatsang went up to Lhasa and what was started there.

A

No, No, here [in Kalimpong] the Chinese office [was in [Pandatsang](#) house]. People were saying that [Pandatsang](#) had given his house at Kalimpong to the Chinese and that he had requested a substitute in Beijing. This is what was said, though I don't know.

Q

According to what people said weren't some people saying that since he returned later, that he must have been working for them.

A

I don't know how close he was. In 1959 he came down [to India]. It is said that he came via Lachen-Lachung [N. Sikkim].

Q

So in 1952 you went up [to Lhasa], right?

A

Yes, and the reason was that I went up and said that I can't manage the work alone, so I requested assistance. Therefore, Taring, Thangmey and Sumdo were sent. And so the 4 of us came down around winter I think, around the 9-10th month.



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So you came down in 1952. Now in 1950-55 or whatever, what was the presence (office, intelligence) and policy of the Chinese here at Kalimpong? Were they coming to meet officials and invite them to dine, etc, etc.

Yes, they took interest.

Q

How? Could you give me an example.

A

They were doing this in 1958. For example, during that time my late father was here [in Kalimpong]. There was a Chinese by the name of Wuzu. He was among the earliest to come. He was not a high-ranking officer, but he was as smart as the devil. He spoke excellent Tibetan and went to all the Kudrak's houses. He knew all their names and where they lived. When the Youth League first began, he was the one who took the messages. So Wuzu was the main person who went to contact all the houses. Everybody knew him.

Q

What do you mean by taking messages?

A

He went to all the houses to say what they should do and to talk. He just came in and talked and that's how he got all the information about the name of the houses and how they behaved and where they lived. So he knew everybody. So in 1958 he was sent down to Kalimpong. There were Tibetans here and so he must have been sent to find out about them. I can't say whom he was sent to contact, but he used to come to our house with surprise visits. He came and talked with my late father and he said he was going to invite us for dinner. There were a lot of other Chinese, like the Chinese Gyami Akula [tib. rgya mi a khu lags] and Zhang Xiansheng. I don't know whether it was out of fear or not, but they [the other Chinese] were being very friendly. On the other hand, since they were all Chinese, they would have language and other things in common, right? So I think they were probably doing some work [for the communists]. Gyami Akula and we were close. We were trade friends from a long time ago. One day he sent a message asking us to come for dinner. We had dined with him on previous occasions.

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Q

Who is Gyami Akula?

A

There was a person known as Gyami Tsering [tib. rgya mi tshe ring]

Yes, I know him. Yes, he was a tall person and stayed here. His brother Akula lives at Lhasa. He rented a house from our property at Jagoji [tib.?]. So Gyami Tsering sent a message asking us to come for dinner. Did Gyami Akula send the message or Gyami Tsering? Gyami Tsering sent a message saying please come for dinner. He said Phodrang Kungö [Bhutan House] is coming and that it's just us, nobody else. When we got there, along with Phodrang Kungö, a few moments later all the members of the Chinese representative group showed up. They must have been invited. So it was a surprise and they were trying to make contact. So we had to be cordial and talk. One couldn't show a stern face and start an argument right? So the Chinese representatives said please come for dinner and they did invite us once. Then they tried to make better relations. During that dinner [at Gyami Tsering's place] they said to come for dinner. So my father said that we cannot come since we are going to the flower show at Darjeeling and besides, we have to go for medical treatment. Their reply was, "Oh, we also happen to be going there! Lets go together!" My father didn't pay much attention, but said Yes, Yes. Later we did not go together. So in this way they were trying to make us "dirty." They were trying to make it difficult for us to stay here. The Indian government is watching and they are going to say, "What are these people up to?" So in this way they were making it difficult for everyone. They must have done the same to others. Then there was another occasion. I was in Calcutta just before the Uprising in 1959. One morning I was reading the newspapers at the Continental Hotel and the headlines read that there was fighting in Lhasa and artillery had been fired. Oh my, I thought. At that time I was about to go to Nepal since I had bought trucks [he was going to start a Nepal Transport Service]. I had already sent my bedding. However, I delegated my work to the Nepalese Gorashar Sota [tib. sgo ra shar zog bdag] [A Newari named Ratna] and I decided to go to Kalimpong to find out what the situation was. So I immediately bought my plane ticket and as soon as I got out of the plane at Bagdogra, the Chinese representatives were there in the same plane. The head of the Trade Mission was there and two interpreters and Wuzu was there too. So they warmly greeted me and I couldn't show a bad face in the airport lounge. So I said hello. They knew

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everything, but they were shaking my hands and saying "Oh, how are you and where are you going?" I said I was going up to Kalimpong. They said, "Oh, come with us we have a car!" So I said I can't go as I have some work and avoided them. So they were doing things like that. Then after that they did not contact me. Then I came up and a meeting took place. It was decided that we would all go to demonstrate in Delhi and that during this occasion, each one had to pay their own fare. I think some money was collected and all the tickets were bought at once. So we all went to Delhi. Where did the meeting take place. I think it took place in the Himalayan Hotel. Who were the main organizers. [Shakabpa](#) was the main person and there were others. Kungö [Lukhangwa](#) was there as well as Ganden Villa Khenjung. So you all went down to Delhi. Yes we all did. We all stayed at the Mariner Hotel. It was very hot at that time. Aunty Phünkhang Anila and late Yuthok Anila also came [interviewee's paternal aunt]. Everybody came. Maybe about 50-60 people. The members of the People's Association must have also come. Including the People's Association representatives there were about 60. There's a photo of it too. It's in the newspapers. I have the cutting here, right? With [Lukhangwa](#) and all. The main persons went to meet Pandit Nehru [Note: see Lhalungba interview H.0082.01] We did not go. Then we all went to the Gandhi Ghat [Memorial] and offered scarves. Under a tree, we had a meeting. At that time there was one Mrs. Bedhi. She spoke in English explaining what had taken place in Tibet. And from our Tibetan side a speech was given. That was it and then we all returned. What did they ask Nehru? That such a terrible thing had taken place over there [Tibet] and so assist us. There is nothing to say except that. That Tibet is completely independent and that we are also petitioning the UN. A letter was written. They also showed it to me. It said that we are independent and told the whole story. And so whatever it is, we are going to petition to the world body, please assist us in our endeavor. Also that the Dalai Lama has had great difficulty and so assist us in whatever way [we need]. So such things were [in the letter]. Now in Kalimpong, there were a lot of students. Since the (Tibetan) government had ongoing relations with the Chinese, did the government send orders for these students to return? Yes, they did. The Kashag most probably contacted the Trade Mission, since that was their representative. So towards the end of 1952 all the students were withdrawn. Did the government ask them to return. Yes, they did. Out of fear they had to. At that time who was attending school here? I don't remember the names. Was sister Namla [tib. rnam lha] there? No. I gave the names to somebody. Didn't I give them to you. Probably. If you did, I have it on file. There were 10 students. Kyibuk Thöndub la stayed back since the Sikkim King said that he should stay

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behind and complete his studies and that they were going to pay his expenses. And so it was made that he could complete his studies. You mean Kyibuk, right. Yes. And then from Delhi, we returned to Kalimpong. Then we were hearing that the Dalai Lama was arriving and so all were attentive and also read the papers. Then it was said that the Dalai Lama had arrived. It was said that he is traveling via Siliguri and so we all went to receive him. Everybody went to the Siliguri railway station and he arrived there. We were all dressed in our yellow dresses. The old government dress. Yes. We all went there with the People's Association and the trumpets and [gyaling](#) instruments were played and the monks lined up and everything. The Dalai Lama did not come out [of the train], but an audience was given. Then he was taken straight to Mussorie. So we returned and just stayed here, Kungö [Shakabpa](#), since he was the main person, went to Mussorie. Then after a month or so there was a telegram from the Kashag asking me to come down. At that time, when they said come here and go there, one had to pay one's own expenses since the government had nothing. So I went down and Surkhang Kungö Depön and I were to translate the daily news. We couldn't translate the whole paper, right? So we translated items pertinent to the Tibet situation. Then it was said that we have to make a national anthem. They asked me if I could do it. I said I would do my best. There was a Gusung Regiment soldier who played in the band. He could sing it. So I said that he would have to sing it and somebody would note it down. Near Mussorie there was this place called Charville which today is an IAS school [Indian Administrative School]. At that time it was a hotel. I spoke with the manager asking about finding out about a bandmaster. I asked him if it was possible and that we will pay the fees. So the soldier [sang](#) the words while I wrote them down and the bandmaster wrote the score. Then he immediately played the song on the piano. Then he wrote the scores for the other instruments. Then he said to come in two days time and the band will play it. So they played it and it was more or less alright. Then it was said that this has to be improved in Delhi and so I went down to Delhi and asked them to improve on it. There was some urgency to the matter since the 1960 commemoration of March 10th was fast approaching. So with much urgency it was improved. Then on the commemoration day, I played the tape recorder. The government did not have a recorder and so I used mine. So in this way I stayed. You said that the [Trapchi](#) [sic. Gusung] soldier knew it and so did they play it in the old days. Yes. The Gusung Regiment played it. When was the national anthem played? This was sometime around 1947-48. Before that the Tibetans played "God Save the King." . Who composed it in 1947? I don't know. Somebody did and it is said that Trijang Rimpoche was also consulted. The flag was made during 13th Dalai

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Lama's time and the Dalai Lama's seal was on the composition itself. My father was told to hand it over to the Foreign Office and it was given to them. There was no photostat copies in those days and not even a photograph was taken, so I don't know if today they based it on that composition or not. Nobody knows for sure. There was also an excellent map of Tibet. If all the pieces were put together it must stretch from there to here. [5-6 feet]. They did not give it. My late father had it and he also presented that. I ended up with a lot of work. All the English words were translated into Tibetan. I wrote the whole thing and it took about two months. Where did you say it was presented? At Lhasa to the Foreign Office. That was in 1946-47. So to continue, then all of a sudden one day I was given the work associated with the gold [in Sikkim], and I was sent to Calcutta. So I was stuck in Calcutta. While in Calcutta, there was Samding Dorje Phamo, her mother and entourage. People said that they all returned to Tibet. Later it was said that Kungö [Pandatsang](#) helped them and send them back. Everyone was surprised and was wondering about it. At that time you were at Calcutta. Yes. Your uncle [Ragashag](#) was trying to get off opium and was seeking assistance. So we helped him and so he used to come to Calcutta quite often. One day uncle [Ragashag](#) said that [Sambo](#) Jigme said that he wanted to return [to Tibet]. So I said how is he going to do that. He said that Samding Dorje Phamo has returned and [Pandatsang](#) told [Sambo](#) to return since his father and everyone was in Tibet and there was no use for him to stay here [in India]. [Pandatsang](#) told him that he will show him how to return. . So uncle [Ragashag](#) said that. He said that he [Sambo] already has his permit ready. I asked how? He said that [Pandatsang](#) took him [Sambo] in a taxi and showed him where the Chinese were located near Park Street. He told him that he himself cannot come, but showed him the house where the Chinese were and that if he went in there they will give him a passport. So he went in there and got his passport and even had a ticket on B.O.A.C. [British Airways]. It was all done. [Ragashag](#) said he was going to leave in 2-3 days time. Now what to do? I said. Oh my, I don't think he should go. He will have a lot of difficulties. He has escaped and now he should not at all return. So the two of them must have spoken and maybe at that time Kungö Gyalola was there and he may have spoken with your uncle. So it was said that it was better to try to stop him. Now they were thinking from the political side [maybe not since uncle's wife was the sister of Sambo]. I was just thinking of helping him. So his ticket was returned and as far as the passport, I said that it can just be left to expire or one could even throw it away. So I found out where the BOAC office was located. It was in the Grand Hotel. So I went there and cancelled the ticket and that was it. So he stayed behind. Such things transpired and it's the real

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fact. It's possible [Pandatsang](#) was acting in good faith saying that his parents are all in Tibet and so he should return. Pandatsang's daughter was [Sambo](#) Lhajam. If he had gone then he was sure to be imprisoned for many years [like his brother and everyone] and he would have suffered during the Cultural Revolution and probably even gotten killed. Now in 1952, Taring George la, Sumdo and you all came down [to Kalimpong] right? Yes, in the 9th-10th month [Tib-month]. Then where did you go? I came here [Kalimpong] in October and went to Calcutta to take delivery of goods. Then we collected them from Siliguri and sent them via SSTS [Sikkim State Transport Service] by truck. We send the goods to Gangtok and Kalimpong. We send the large items that humans carry to Gangtok. At Kalimpong we had to repack them into smaller boxes made by carpenters and then send them up [from the Kalimpong side]. At Sikkim, there was a storage place at the palace, which we borrowed and that's where we kept our things. Then we gradually sent things up. During this time the mule pack animals were more abundant from Kalimpong. The route via Natöla is much more dangerous and it was more difficult to find mules. Especially at that time since my father was competing for mules with the Chinese who were paying a lot of money to transport rice because of the food scarcity in Tibet. Then when the rains came and everything came to a stand still. So in the summer of 1953 we returned [to Lhasa] and then came down in the winter of 1953. So during 1952-53 you were sending things and going back and forth. During this time what was the political situation like. Everybody sort of thought, well it may just be okay and so all returned in 1952 and So everybody was just staying like that, though everyone was unhappy. From the government side were they trying their best to work things out? They were doing their best and they just stayed like that and sort of neglected things. On the other hand, the Chinese were getting everything lined up. They were starting the Youth League, the Women's League, the schools, and all the offices, building houses, trading. They gave money to Tibetan traders and ordered goods. Tibetans brought construction sheets, galvanized sheets, steel, cement. This [India] was the only place to bring goods. And there was money to be made in transporting goods. And so everyone was sort of preoccupied with economics. And road construction too. Yes. And in terms of trade was it a time when there was a lot of money to be made. Yes, a lot. And people had money and they had [dayan](#) silver coins and they did their best. The Chinese, it seemed, were paying for road construction according to some square meter [completed rather than day wage]. And so Tibetans used to work overtime. It is said that even when they were told not to do [more work], they would do it. Like piece meal. And they [the Chinese] were giving a lot of [dayan](#) very liberally.



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Should one say they looted it? At Xining, Ma Bufang had a hell of a lot of [dayan](#) and so they got all of that. Then they got them from numerous sources. So they used to send up boxes of [dayan](#) and distributed it. It is said that the Chinese used to say, "Give it to them. They can't eat it all up and it will be left over. Later we can just gather it up". It is said that when the Chinese first came they used to sweet talk us a lot. Anyway, in the end, one day one has to tread the path of socialism because there is a socialist system. So during 1952-53 what were they doing? Did they come to people's homes. What were they saying about socialism. Were they saying that it is good, etc? Yes, they were. At the Youth League meetings they would say it as "propaganda" [tib. dril bsgrags]. Likewise at the Women's meeting and at any meetings. And during ceremonies they would say that Tibet has to be made proper and develop, and so and so. In 1954-55 they were saying that they were going to start a school for government officials. For government officials? Yes, for the officials. It was called the cadre's school [tib. las byed slob grwa]. They said that it was going to begin in Drungji Lingka. They said that they were making a lot of beds and that's where the Kudrak were going to sleep. So there was such talk. Then people used to go around saying that you don't need a home. Not at the meetings. but indirectly like disseminating info [tib. gtam dbyugs]. What were they saying about homes? They were saying that keeping a home is a poison den [tib. dug rtswa] and its better without it. For example, they said that one doesn't have to worry about children. The state will look after them. Now you all can stay where you work [at your office] and women, whether you work in the Women's League or a hospital you can stay right there. Then during the weekend you can meet and go about and as far as children are concerned, there is no need to go through so much trouble. And keeping a big house like that is a lot of trouble for you. So what's the use. So they were saying things like that. They were saying things like that? Yes, they were. Not only that, they must have said that to others and they said it to us too. They said you have so many unnecessary things in your house so sell these to us and we will buy them. Who said that? Was it the Chinese? Did they come to our house. Yes and we used to go to the Trade Office [tib. tshong don las khungs]. Where is that house? In the old [Pandatsang](#) House at Lhasa. It was called the Procurement Office. There was this man called Liu Buzhang. He would invite us for dinner. The various Offices used to invite us to dine. At that time, they would say they need this and that. Then they would give us the money and the (purchase) order. One day they told me they needed tires. The brands we knew at that time were Dunlop and Firestone. That's all they had in India. So they, it seems, were asking for Michelin and Perelli. I said I never heard of them (laughter).

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They insisted that they existed. So they ordered a lot of things from various people. So therefore, those who knew them were all scared when the Chinese said that they were going to start a school for government workers. The majority were not told anything and so they just stayed like that. If the Chinese got the [Tibetan] leaders to do something, then the rest will follow, right? The majority don't know anyway. The traders were too preoccupied with money and they knew nothing about communism. They just did trading, going to India and bringing things up. They were preoccupied with that. Earlier you said something about them saying that there is no use in keeping items in one's house. They asked us to sell all the unnecessary things and so I made a list. No. Did they come to the house? Yes. But what for? To get the items? Yes, but did they need your things. They were not saying anything. They were probably thinking of cleaning up the house. They said that one's mind get attached to the house and so if the items were bought up then the house will be empty and so one would not be attached to the home. Maybe that was the idea, I don't know. I think there was some policy behind it. Anyway, were they saying that they want items from our house? They said if you want to sell then we will buy it and so please give us a list. So I took the opportunity and made the list. I had a huge radio that was bigger than these two [cupboard] [5ft by 4 ft approx]. It had 15-inch loud speakers and it had a huge radio in the middle with an amplifier. In those days it was all valves [as opposed to transistorized]. Then bicycles, motorcycles and all sorts of odds and ends, tables. They took all of it. They did not even bargain much. They gave me more than 5 lakhs of Rupees in checks and said to trade with it. So I traded with it and brought items up [from India]. Anyway, we had so many things left in the house like saddles, etc. Then there was also a lot of fear since they were planning to put us up there. Planning on making us sleep there [in the cadre's school]. They were thinking of destroying [the kudrak]. Then there was a lot of talk about what they had done in the eastern areas about doing something against religion and monasteries. And that so and so got killed and that such things were said in the newspapers. Unable to quite make out why the Chinese wanted to buy the items I asked my father again. They bought the items on 10-21-56 and 4 separate checks were issued of 144,000 Rs each. He said he feels that there was some policy at that time since they did not ask for specific items. Neither did they require these items since it had already been 5 years since they came to Tibet and had plenty of time to get their own. They did not bargain much and took whatever he put out. Later on they told him he can trade with the money and so my father bought various items with that money. They never asked for specific items and quantities, but bought anything. So there was all this talks



and there was fear for everyone. Then they said that the Dalai Lama must go to China and people opposed this. So in 1954 were you in Lhasa? Yes, I was. So was there talk that the Dalai Lama should not go down. Yes. It was in the summer of 1954. I think it was in the 7th month. When the Dalai Lama went into the boat all the people went and they wept. There was this woman called Asula, who got around. She did some trading here and there. It is said that she started crying and said that she was going to jump in the river and started running on the banks of the Tsangpo. Somebody said, "Okay jump, let me see you jump" and then they said that she didn't have the guts. So this was like a joke said in jest. Anyway, they burned incense and the Dalai Lama left. During this time did you have to go for the farewell meeting [tib. phebs skyel]. Yes. Everyone had to go. Where? [Norbulinga](#)? Yes, from [Norbulinga](#) since it was summer. What was the mood in Lhasa? The mood was such that it was said that it is not alright for the Dalai Lama to go. At that time one heard things like people were taken here and then they disappeared. That people were disappearing. That this monastery does not have a lama because he was invited and then he disappeared. So this was very strong in people's minds. By 1954? Yes by 1954. It seems that such things did happen in the eastern areas. By then they had already taken the guns in the Kham area so the problems started. Then the Dalai Lama went down for the 10th October 1954 and returned in 1955, in March I think. I was in Lhasa at that time and the government was not talking about the hydroelectric station at all. Surkhang Khenjung and I were told that we had to go for the second [denshu](#) for the Dalai Lama at Chamdo. So the two of us left. The Dalai Lama did not come and at Chamdo we just hung around. We stayed in Chamdo monastery for about 10 days and just walked and hung around, listening to the radio, etc.